

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. In a vehicle comprising a first device and a second device, an active
5 network communicatively coupling the first and second data devices, the active
network including a plurality of active network elements coupled by connection
media, the plurality of active network elements and connection media being
configurable to provide a plurality of communication paths between the first device
and the second device for a communication between the first device and the second
10 device.
2. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second devices are
coupled to at least one of the active network elements.
- 15 3. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active elements
comprises a switch.
4. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active elements
comprises a bridge.
- 20 5. The vehicle of claim 2, wherein at least one of the active elements
comprises a router.
6. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network comprises a packet data
25 network.

7. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network complies with an Internet protocol standard.

8. The vehicle of claim 1, comprising an interface coupled to the active network to receive configuration information, the data transport medium being configurable responsive to the configuration information.

9. The vehicle of claim 7, wherein the interface comprises a wireless interface.

10. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network is reconfigurable responsive to detection of a fault within the data transport medium.

11. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network is automatically, periodically reconfigured.

12. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein one of the plurality of active network elements comprises a root node element, and wherein the active network is configured relative to the root node element.

13. The vehicle of claim 1, wherein the active network is configured to include time information.

14. Within a motor vehicle, an active network for communicating data between a first device and a second device within the motor vehicle, the active network comprising:

5 a data interface to each of the first device and the second device for coupling the first device and the second device, respectively, to the active network, wherein the data interface operates to accept data from or deliver data to the device, respectively, independently of the functionality of the respective device;

a plurality of active network elements coupled by connection media;

the interfaces being coupled to at least one of the active network elements; and

10 wherein the active network elements are configurable to define a plurality of communication paths between the first device and the second device for a communication between the first device and the second device.

15 15. The active network of claim 14, wherein the active network comprises a packet data network.

16. The active network of claim 14, wherein the active elements are selected from the group of active elements comprising: a switch, a bridge and a router.

20 17. The active network of claim 14, wherein the active network elements are reconfigurable responsive to detection of a fault within the data transport medium.

18. The active network of claim 14, wherein the active network elements are automatically, periodically reconfigured.

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Year	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050	2051	2052	2053	2054	2055	2056	2057	2058	2059	2060	2061	2062	2063	2064	2065	2066	2067	2068	2069	2070	2071	2072	2073	2074	2075	2076	2077	2078	2079	2080	2081	2082	2083	2084	2085	2086	2087	2088	2089	2090	2091	2092	2093	2094	2095	2096	2097	2098	2099	2100
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